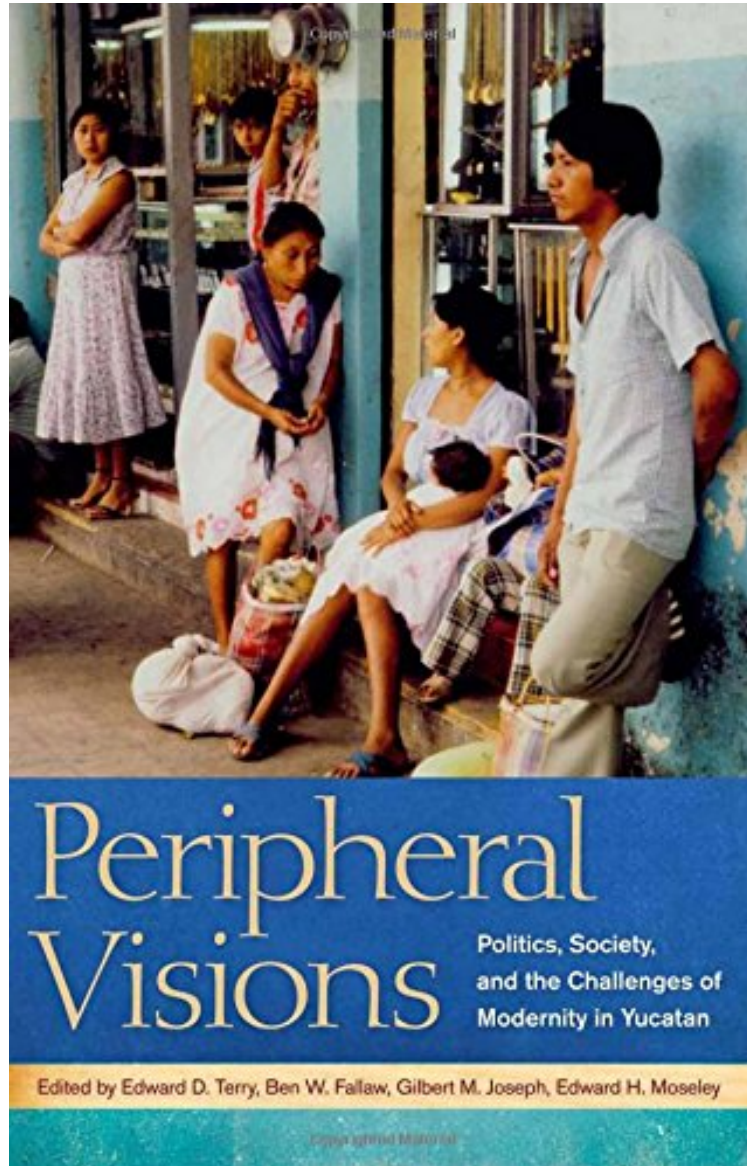


[Library ebook] Peripheral Visions: Politics, Society, and the Challenges of Modernity in Yucatan

# Peripheral Visions: Politics, Society, and the Challenges of Modernity in Yucatan

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Yucatan has been called a world apart cut off from the rest of Mexico by geography and culture. Yet, despite its peripheral location, the region experienced substantial change in the decades after independence. As elsewhere in Mexico, apostles of modernization introduced policies intended to remold Yucatan in the image of the advanced nations of the day. Indeed, modernizing change began in the late colonial era and continued throughout the 19th century as traditional patterns of land tenure were altered and efforts were made to divest the Catholic Church of its wealth and political and intellectual influence. Some changes, however, produced fierce resistance from both elites and humbler Yucatecans and modernizers were frequently forced to retreat or at least reach accommodation with their foes. Covering topics from the early 19th century to the late 20th century, the essays in this collection illuminate both the processes of change and the negative reactions that they frequently elicited. The diversity of disciplines covered by this volume—history, anthropology, sociology, economics—illuminates at least three overriding challenges for study of the peninsula today. One is politics after the decline of the Institutional Revolutionary Party: What are the important institutions, practices, and discourses of politics in a post-postrevolutionary era? A second trend is the scholarly demystification of the Maya: Anthropologists have shown the difficulties of applying monolithic terms like Maya in a society where ethnic relations are often situational and ethnic boundaries are fluid. And a third consideration: researchers are only now beginning to grapple with the region's transition to a post-henequen economy based on tourism, migration, and the assembly plants known as maquiladoras. Challenges from agribusiness and industry will no doubt continue to affect the peninsula's fragile Karst topography and unique environments. Contributors: Eric N. Baklanoff, Helen Delpar, Paul K. Eiss, Ben W. Fallaw, Gilbert M. Joseph, Marie Lapointe, Othn Baos Ramirez, Hernn Menndez Rodriguez, Lynda S. Morrison, Terry Rugeley, Stephanie J. Smith

About the Author Edward D. Terry is a professor emeritus of Spanish and director of the Alfredo Barrera Vsquez Center for Yucatecan Studies at The University of Alabama, where he organized and was director of the Latin American Studies program from 1966 to 1972. Among his several publications on Hispanic topics in the United States and in Yucatan are: *Yucatan: Worlds Apart* (University of Alabama Press, 1980), and *Alfredo Barrera Vzquez: Breve Semblanza de dos perspectivas de un fillogo y humanista*, in *Unicornio* 10, no. 513 (2001). Dr. Terry was secretary-treasurer of the Southeastern Conference of Latin American Studies and editor of the *Southeastern Latin Americanist* and later served as president of the Southeastern Conference on Latin-American Studies and of the Southwest Council of Latin American Studies. Ben W. Fallaw is an associate professor of Latin American studies and history at Colby College in Waterville, Maine. His first book, *Crdenas Compromised: The Failure of Reform in Yucatan*, came out in 2001 (Duke University Press). In 2005 he coedited a special edition of the *Journal of Latin American Anthropology* on Maya identity. Dr. Fallaw is also coeditor of *Heroes and Hero Cults in Latin America* (University of Texas Press, 2006). Currently he is completing a study of political relations between Catholics and the revolutionary state in Mexico from the end of the Cristero War to 1940. Gilbert M. Joseph is the Farnam Professor of History and International Studies and the recent director of Latin American and Iberian Studies at Yale University. He has published several books on Yucatan and Latin America. His most recent books are *In from the Cold: Latin Americas New Encounter with the Cold War*, coedited with Daniela Spenser (2008), and *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence during Latin Americas Long Cold War*, coedited with Greg Grandin (2009), both published by Duke University Press. He is currently working on a book that examines transnational lives and cultural encounters in the American century. The late Edward H. Moseley was director of international programs and professor emeritus of Latin American history at The University of Alabama. He was coeditor (with Edward D. Terry) of the collection of essays *Yucatan: A World Apart* (University of Alabama Press, 1980) and coauthor (with Paul C. Clark) of *Historical Dictionary of the United States Mexican War* (Scarecrow Press, 1997). He later coedited (with Eric N. Baklanoff) *Yucatn in an Era of Globalization* (University of Alabama Press, 2008), to which he contributed the essay *From Tallapoosa to Tixkokob: Two Communities Share Globalization*. A past president of the Southeastern Council of Latin American Studies, he was also executive director of the Alabama-Guatemala Partners of the Americas.